

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

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NATURAL GAS BUILDING EXPLOSION & *

FIRE NEAR WEST READING, *

Accident No.: PLD23LR002

PENNSYLVANIA, ON MARCH 24, 2023 *

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Interview of: JACOB MOTACKI, Paramedic-in-Charge
ANTHONY TUCCI, Executive Director/Chief
JESSE MAGILL, Assistant Chief
CARRIE FREY, Deputy Chief
Western Berks Ambulance Association

Western Berks Ambulance
Association
2506 Belmont Avenue
West Lawn, Pennsylvania

Monday,
April 10, 2023

APPEARANCES:

SHERYL HARLEY, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

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I N T E R V I E W

(1:05 p.m.)

1
2
3 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So good afternoon. My name is Sheryl
4 Harley. I'm an investigator with the National Transportation
5 Safety Board. And today is --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: April 10th.

7 MS. HARLEY: -- April 10th, and it's at 1:05 p.m. And, I'm
8 located at the Western Berks -- is it Ambulance --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Ambulance Association.

10 MS. HARLEY: -- Ambulance Association, located at 2505
11 Belmont.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Correct.

13 MS. HARLEY: Okay. And we are here today to talk about the
14 incident that occurred at R.M. Palmer Company that occurred on the
15 24th at approximately 6:55 p.m. [sic] in the afternoon. And for
16 the tape, I'm just going to ask everybody just to identify
17 themselves.

18 MR. MAGILL: Jesse Magill.

19 MR. MOTACKI: Jacob Motacki.

20 MS. FREY: Carrie Frey.

21 MR. TUCCI: Anthony Tucci.

22 INTERVIEW OF JACOB MOTACKI, ANTHONY TUCCI,

23 JESSE MAGILL & CARRIE FREY

24 MS. HARLEY: So as we said earlier on, what I'm looking at is
25 to kind of get a sense of, number 1, your response there, how you

1 were notified of the incident, when you got there, what you saw.
2 We're looking at anything to include what you saw, what you heard,
3 what you smelled, anything like that. So I guess I'm going to
4 start with -- my understanding is --

5 MR. TUCCI: Jake would have been the very first one on scene.

6 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So I'll tell you what. Jake, why don't
7 we start with you.

8 MR. MOTACKI: Well, I got there by luck. I was actually
9 finished off my shift. I was driving down the road when I came
10 across the hill and seen the debris pattern. Everybody was
11 running everywhere. People were running out of their homes.
12 People were running from the scene. I parked about 3 1/2, 4
13 blocks up. I put on my vest, and I just ran down to the scene.

14 When I got there, it was obviously chaotic. There was a
15 crowd of people forming in the street. I was trying to figure who
16 was involved, who wasn't. I don't really know. You can kind of
17 see that there were multiple ones that were walking around
18 aimlessly that were trying to figure out what was going on. I was
19 directed to the one guy that was laying on the driveway. And then
20 while I was talking to the person, it was just a regular bystander
21 that was there, I was then pointed to the woman who was up a
22 little further, closest to the debris field that was across the
23 street from the Palmer Building. Myself and then one of the other
24 local 6003 of --

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Larry Moyer.

1 MR. MOTACKI: Yeah. He was there on the radio because like I
2 said, I was off duty. I had no radio. I had no knowledge of what
3 was going on before me driving up onto it. One of our other
4 employees that lived in the area, his name is Jim Beam, he came
5 from the other side of Penn -- towards Penn Avenue and met me
6 there. He helped me extricate that patient. We moved her to a
7 more safer area that wasn't as close to the debris field, and we
8 just rendered basic care at that point.

9 When it comes to what I heard and what I smelled, I was
10 primarily taking care of that patient. I can't say that I notably
11 smelled anything initially with everything else that was going on.
12 We were still trying to figure out what happened, where should we
13 be, and then other responders started showing up. I remained with
14 that patient, jumped on the truck with Reading Fire Department. I
15 think it was Medic 3, but I'm not 100 percent sure on that.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was.

17 MR. MOTACKI: And I transported them to Reading with them.
18 At that time -- before we left the scene, I know Magill showed up.
19 I told him, like I'm just here. I don't have a truck. I'm going
20 to hop on with them, and I'll be back, and that's it.

21 I came back later after we dropped off. The fire guys --
22 Medic 3 dropped me off at 3rd and Spruce, and I walked back down
23 and I just kind of rendered the go getter and the gopher for the
24 most of the evening.

25 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right.

1 MR. MOTACKI: While I was there later, you could smell the
2 gas, like you could smell a gas odor, but I can't say anything
3 initially when I was there that I noticed anything.

4 MS. HARLEY: Okay. When you say later you could smell the
5 gas, can you approximate the time?

6 MR. MOTACKI: No.

7 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

8 MR. MOTACKI: At that time, my cell phone was dead. I
9 didn't have a radio. I had to borrow somebody's Facebook account
10 to contact my wife to left her know, like, hey, I won't be home
11 for a while.

12 MS. HARLEY: Okay. I'm going to start -- Mr. Magill, let's
13 start with you now.

14 MR. MAGILL: When I arrived, I parked on Franklin Street
15 between Yarnell and South 2nd Avenue, and when I walked down
16 around the corner, I just got the odor of smoke. At that point,
17 the fire department was getting the first line in service and
18 starting to attack the fire and the wind direction was changing
19 and blowing smoke in the direction of where Jake was in the
20 driveway to that parking lot.

21 So I had first approached up to Jake because I saw that he
22 was rendering care to these patients, and then I went back to my
23 vehicle to get supplies for him. And, at that point then I had
24 actually stepped back from the scene a little bit to start
25 establishing the command structure. There was too many people

1 trying to do face-to-face with me when I was setting that up. So
2 I had removed myself a little bit back from the scene until Tony
3 arrived. And that's when we then had a face-to-face and started
4 delegating tasks and like I said, we were in that initial stage of
5 establishing a command structure.

6 As far as what I seen, it was -- the debris field obviously
7 scattered across the street. I was directed towards a deceased
8 victim that was in the street still covered with some debris, I
9 believe by Jake initially and then some other fire personnel made
10 mention that there was a victim there in the street that was
11 covered with debris and I covered her up with a blanket. And then
12 I had identified to the fire commander that there was that
13 deceased victim in the street.

14 From that point, was when we got into more of the rescue
15 operations after getting the two patients that were with Jake
16 transported from the scene. And then, we really started working
17 on accountability of how many victims we were looking for from the
18 factory itself, and then other bystanders that were in the area
19 that may have been injured.

20 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Question, are -- your radios and the fire
21 department radios, were they on the same channel?

22 MR. MAGILL: They were not. When I arrived on scene, I
23 requested to move all the EMS operations to a separate channel
24 just because there was so much radio traffic on the fire side.

25 MS. HARLEY: Okay. And what channel would that be for you?

1 MR. MAGILL: It was Berks EMS Ops 1.

2 MS. HARLEY: And just to be clear, so there was a deceased
3 female that was seen in the street under debris.

4 MR. MAGILL: Correct.

5 MS. HARLEY: And the victim that was in the driveway, male or
6 female?

7 MR. MAGILL: There was two victims, one female, one male.

8 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

9 MR. MOTACKI: The female's the one that we moved from down
10 the way a little bit closer to the flame and debris field, we
11 moved her to the drive where the other male was located. So they
12 were both together.

13 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. And, that male victim was
14 deceased or alive?

15 MR. MOTACKI: The one in the driveway was alive.

16 MS. HARLEY: He was alive. Okay. All right.

17 MR. MAGILL: Yeah. Upon our initial arrival, the only
18 deceased victim that we had located was that one that I covered
19 with the blanket.

20 MS. HARLEY: And that was the one that was under debris?

21 MR. MAGILL: Correct.

22 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Great. All right.

23 MR. MAGILL: I hope that helps you a little bit.

24 MS. HARLEY: So, were you aware of anyone else that was, that
25 was still trapped in the building?

1 MR. MAGILL: We were told that they were gathering
2 information as far as the number of employees that were onsite at
3 the time. And, there was no confirmation. It was estimate -- it
4 was estimated. The police department was quickly working on
5 trying to identify how many victims but we -- upon the initial
6 arrival, we had just estimate numbers. And I believe at some
7 point, somebody had started the numbers actually fairly high in
8 the 20 to 30 range I believe is what we were initially told.

9 MS. HARLEY: Um-hum.

10 MR. MAGILL: And then as more information became available,
11 it was scaled back to I believe seven unaccounted for victims from
12 the R.M. Palmer facility. And then including bystanders, I think
13 we still were estimating in the range of 10 to 15.

14 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Did either one of you -- were you advised
15 of or were you aware of the driver that was trapped under the
16 debris on Cherry Street?

17 MR. MAGILL: Yes. Fire personnel, that was victim number 3
18 that would have been transported. 85 -- Company 85 was the ones
19 working that area there, found him there, and brought him out from
20 the -- they brought him and 6004 transported that gentleman
21 offsite. They advised us that was -- because that was the third
22 critical victim that was transported off the scene. It was the
23 two that Jake had seen and Jesse had moved over towards the
24 walkway, there was the deceased in the street, and he was the
25 other victim, the driver of the truck.

1 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Chief, I'm going to ask you, Company 85
2 is?

3 MR. MAGILL: Spring Township Fire.

4 MS. HARLEY: Thank you. And, Jake, I'm going to ask you, the
5 female, generally can you describe her injuries?

6 MR. MOTACKI: Ooh.

7 MS. HARLEY: Just generally. You don't have to get really,
8 really specific.

9 MR. MOTACKI: She had burns to the face. I don't know what
10 she looked like prior to the incident, but facial swelling. Her
11 left arm had a large laceration and the bone was not intact
12 anywhere from her shoulder down it felt. Abdomenwise, there was a
13 laceration maybe of a puncture, but nothing that was grossly
14 bleeding, but the extent of her injuries were hard to determine
15 because of everything there.

16 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. Okay. And she was
17 transported to Reading?

18 MR. MOTACKI: And then I guess from what I gathered later,
19 they flew her to Lehigh then.

20 MS. HARLEY: Okay. That's the victim at Lehigh. Okay.

21 MR. MOTACKI: I believe.

22 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

23 MR. MAGILL: All patients were taken to Reading.

24 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

25 MR. MAGILL: Or showed up at Reading.

1 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. So, Chief, I'm going to turn
2 to you and --

3 CHIEF TUCCI: So I got the page when I was at home on our
4 first (indiscernible). I immediately got to my truck and
5 responded and listened to the information hearing Jesse on the
6 radio. I knew he was taking command and the situation where they
7 were. I notified both hospitals via our command radios that we
8 had a major incident going on. Listened to the additional through
9 Berks, getting how many victims there were approximately. Once we
10 got a confirmed number from Berks, I declared VMCI 2B, and that
11 sent us all the other resources, about 20 ALS trucks, 4
12 helicopters and --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have those numbers.

14 MS. HARLEY: Great.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Two air medical units were placed on
16 standby, and we had a total of 23 MICUs which are ALS.

17 MS. HARLEY: ALS, okay.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And one BLS unit and two squads which
19 are ALS non-transport.

20 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right.

21 CHIEF TUCCI: I arrived on scene from the opposite side of
22 Penn coming up from 422 and the cloverleaf there, parked my
23 vehicle just under the bridge, the railroad bridge there.

24 MS. HARLEY: Um-hum.

25 CHIEF TUCCI: Got an ascertain of where, what was going on,

1 where command was, came down past the apartments and made my turn
2 down onto 2nd. I met up with Jesse and got kind of a detail of
3 the scene, a face-to-face we had. I told him he was going to be
4 command. He had already run with the first 10 minutes of the
5 incident. There was no need to change off. Apparently some other
6 people thought we should have, but again, we're all chiefs.
7 Jesse's got career years in the fire service. There's no need to
8 do that. We could do other tasks.

9 Saw the victim number -- saw both victims there in the
10 street, saw the deceased. Saw fire working. The first victim was
11 transported off. Then I saw the second one, and that got
12 transported by our truck who was Mike Roth and Michele I think it
13 was.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I think it was Michelle.

15 MS. FREY: No, Brittany.

16 CHIEF TUCCI: Brittany probably -- Mike and Brittany. And
17 probably some other -- I'm not sure.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Troy Minner.

19 CHIEF TUCCI: Troy Minner, yeah. They left, and then 85. We
20 started getting triage and transport set up. I became the triage
21 officer in case we had any more victims, conferring with how many
22 -- trying to get an accurate count of how many victims escaped
23 out, how many were still in the disaster zone we'll call it, in
24 the pile and trying to get that set up. We had units that were
25 backed up. Chief 600 which would be the City of Reading, Mike

1 Stinski (ph.) came in. He was assigned the transport officer
2 duties. So him and I were in communication. We were transporting
3 patients in and out. His job was to track where the patients were
4 going. And then Captain Zerving (ph.) from Muhlenberg (ph.) EMS
5 got there and he became the staging officer because we had so many
6 trucks coming in to deal with and kind of just let that.

7 Once we kind of got those three, four patients off, some
8 other patients presented to the MICU units in and around the
9 scene. 6711 and 6922 transported some patients. And what we were
10 told was there was a couple of patients that showed up at the
11 hospital from the neighborhood. And we were informed later that
12 the patient who -- the person who lived in the apartment which
13 would have been --

14 MR. MOTACKI: 5 South 2nd Avenue.

15 CHIEF TUCCI: -- 5 South 2nd Avenue --

16 MR. MOTACKI: Apartment 1.

17 CHIEF TUCCI: -- had -- who had been in the structure before,
18 left the scene, went to his friend's house in West Lawn, and then
19 they called 911 from there, and our crew went up and assessed him,
20 and obtained a refusal from him.

21 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

22 CHIEF TUCCI: Once we kind of got a handle on there were no
23 more victims coming out, we kind of strategized our sessions.
24 Jesse went down to the main incident command post, down at the
25 Borough Garage. Myself and Deputy Chief Frey and Assistant Chief

1 Hackman kind of were up at the operations side, up on the scene,
2 trying to coordinate what other resources we were going to need.
3 And then I switched out with Jesse about 11 o'clock so that he
4 could go home and get some sleep because he was back in the next
5 day. And then I passed off to the nightshift supervisor around
6 2:15, 2:30, and then was back on scene on at 7 a.m.

7 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So, at the time you arrived on the scene,
8 was extrication still ongoing for the occupants of apartment or
9 had they already been --

10 CHIEF TUCCI: They had already been out.

11 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

12 CHIEF TUCCI: From what I understand, they were kind of self-
13 extricated and coming out themselves.

14 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

15 CHIEF TUCCI: They sent some fire personnel in to check and
16 they got some of them out that way.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That was Reading Ladder 1 that was
18 working on that.

19 MS. HARLEY: All right.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They had put the aerial up to the roof
21 of the apartment, the part that had collapsed off of the building,
22 and I'm not sure if they had actually made any rescues from that
23 position or not.

24 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So, give me a sense of what the fire
25 looked like to you.

1 CHIEF TUCCI: So, when I got there, from -- I got on the Penn
2 Avenue side, it was kind of a twofold location. What I can piece
3 together, it looked from the Penn Avenue side, there was a
4 location there, and then there was kind of a location on the
5 Franklin side or the 2nd Street side. They were hitting it from a
6 couple directions. As the night went on, they had a ladder truck
7 on Penn Avenue extended out, extinguishing some of the blaze.
8 Ladder 1 was up with it's ladder pipe and they had a couple of
9 deck guns on the floor trying to do some suppression from there
10 and a couple of hand lines.

11 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So, let's see. So the following day, you
12 have a -- you have the second class 5. Do you have a sense of
13 where that person was found?

14 MR. MOTACKI: So we were presented with this from the USAR
15 team, and --

16 MS. HARLEY: Yes, I saw this. Okay.

17 MR. MOTACKI: There's -- that was one. I think -- that was
18 definitely number 1 was right there, Jesse. That was the one that
19 was in the street?

20 MR. MAGILL: Correct.

21 MS. HARLEY: Okay. It was a female. Okay.

22 MR. MOTACKI: Two came out -- they knew were 2 was from the
23 rescued person. So two was in this general area. I'm not sure --

24 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

25 MR. MOTACKI: -- because they said they could -- the lady who

1 came out when they rescued her, that she heard screaming or
2 whatever, for some time --

3 MS. HARLEY: Um-hum.

4 MR. MOTACKI: -- until that. So number 2 was somewhere in
5 that area there. I can't tell you which one was 2 and which one
6 was 3.

7 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. So, let's see. So the
8 following day, which would be Sunday, on the 26th, you have that
9 the fifth victim and the sixth victim -- fifth victim was found at
10 12, and the sixth victim at 7:15. Do you have some sense of where
11 they were?

12 MR. MOTACKI: I'm going to go -- I know number -- this one --
13 I believe this one was 6 because that was the one that was brought
14 up from the crane, I'm pretty sure.

15 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

16 MR. MOTACKI: Okay. Because that looks in the general
17 vicinity of where that crane would have been. There's another one
18 here --

19 MS. HARLEY: Yeah.

20 MR. MOTACKI: -- that's right under there.

21 MS. HARLEY: Um-hum.

22 MR. MOTACKI: That could be 3. I know that some kind of came
23 from back in this area, too. That was set kind of like -- I think
24 that was 3 and 4 I want to say.

25 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

1 MR. MOTACKI: I can't tell you any more exactly because --

2 MS. HARLEY: Not a problem. So --

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: We weren't, we weren't on the scene
4 pulling out. The USAR team was.

5 MS. HARLEY: Um-hum.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So they might be able to tell you, PA
7 Task Force One, which one is which. I know we would get them --
8 the stuff for the coroner's bag, they would load the patient in or
9 we would if it was near the scene because a couple were brought
10 out by (indiscernible) means, and we would get them the coroner's
11 bag. Then we would take it to our set up morgue. The coroner
12 would come in and then take possession.

13 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. So, Chief Frey, before I get
14 to you.

15 CHIEF FREY: Um-hum.

16 MS. HARLEY: So, who actually called the Urban Search and
17 Rescue team?

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So we had requested that through
19 Berks, and the would have been through John Fritz, the EMA
20 coordinator with the assistance of one of their Task Force members
21 who works for Tower direct who is a PA Task Force member
22 recommended that. And one of the Task Force members had responded
23 to the scene. Ken had. I guess he got a call. So he started his
24 way up just in case.

25 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And we also got Montgomery County
2 because they were the ones that did the rescue, Montgomery County
3 20 USAR.

4 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They were the ones who pulled the
6 rescue out.

7 MS. HARLEY: Montgomery County 20.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

9 MS. HARLEY: Is that their number?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Montgomery County 20.

11 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. So, Chief Frey, I'm going to
12 come back to you.

13 CHIEF FREY: Okay. So I was at home, actually trying to
14 figure out what I was going to do for dinner, when Captain Zerving
15 called me and said that he was going to relocate trucks into our
16 area. And then he said, oh, never mind. They just declared it a
17 MCI, and I said okay. So I made my way in. I picked up our
18 Assistant Chief Hackman on the way in, and I probably got there, I
19 don't know, 10 minutes into it maybe.

20 MR. MAGILL: You were probably about 5 to 7 after I got
21 there.

22 CHIEF FREY: Well, Medic 4 didn't have a patient yet.

23 MR. MAGILL: Yeah, so it's not long after I got there, she
24 was there.

25 CHIEF FREY: Because that's the one that Shiffer (ph.) was

1 with, right, Medic 4. Yeah.

2 MR. MAGILL: Yeah.

3 CHIEF FREY: So they were still extricating that patient when
4 I got there. So maybe 10, 12 minutes into the scene. I went up
5 to Jesse, and I said to him, I'm here to do whatever, and he
6 already had everything just, you know, situated. So I was just
7 kind of a whatever needed to be done type person.

8 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So my --

9 MR. MAGILL: And she had eventually taken over for Chief
10 Sakundra (ph.) as the transport officer, so we could release him
11 from the scene.

12 MS. HARLEY: Okay. While you were on the scene, did anybody
13 observe a secondary gas explosion?

14 CHIEF FREY: No.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know a lot of people talked about
16 it, but I wasn't there. Jake would have been the one that was
17 closest to it, and he --

18 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Outside of the building, we're going to
19 call it -- I'm going to call it Building No. 2, which was the
20 building that the explosion occurred in, did you see fire in the
21 bigger building or Building No. 1?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

23 MS. HARLEY: Could you hear the fire alarms going off in
24 Building No. 1?

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing that I can recall.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Nothing that I can.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: There was too much loud screaming,
3 yelling, carrying on.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: The chaos of the scene may have
5 drowned it out, because there was a lot of apparatus in a very
6 small area, but I don't recall ever hearing any of that. But, I
7 believe -- who went in?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: If there was, it was hard to determine
9 what building it was because the one immediately from Building 2,
10 whichever one was the incident, that one, I don't know what it
11 was, but all the windows were blown out of that, too. So you
12 couldn't really pinpoint where the sounds were coming from exactly
13 at that time.

14 MS. HARLEY: So the building that's immediately across
15 behind, that would be on the opposite sidewalk.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, the opposite sidewalk, yeah.

17 MS. HARLEY: Got it.

18 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: C&S.

19 MS. HARLEY: C&S, correct.

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

21 MS. HARLEY: Did any of you go into Building No. 1, the
22 building that was still standing?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

24 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

25 CHIEF FREY: Well, I lied. I'm sorry. I went into the

1 foyer.

2 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

3 CHIEF FREY: Because we were going to use that as the morgue
4 area, but that's when they determined that the wall was bowing
5 out. So they determined it unsafe.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, correct.

7 CHIEF FREY: So that's the only time I was in there. I'm
8 sorry.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Correct. I was there probably also.

10 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So just to make sure I know, the foyer,
11 was that the building main door that you went in or was it the
12 smaller door that's off to the --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It was the double doors.

14 MS. HARLEY: The double doors.

15 CHIEF FREY: Um-hum.

16 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Did you smell when you went in there?

17 CHIEF FREY: Uh-huh.

18 MS. HARLEY: Okay. So let me just go over and make sure I've
19 got everything that I need. So outside of the issue with trying
20 to account for the workers, were there any other problems on the
21 scene that you encountered?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't think there was probably any.
23 We had very good communication between fire and EMS and police.
24 There were some little confusions on where they were going to go
25 with command post, but everyone was doing what they needed to do.

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: At that time, they were trying to
2 evacuate manpower from that block because they were afraid of
3 Building 1 not being structurally sound.

4 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: So there was a few times where we had
6 moved the manpower staging area and the command post. Apparatus
7 staging was normal emergency scene, you know.

8 CHIEF FREY: Chaos.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Chaos.

10 MS. HARLEY: Got it.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But, no, I don't think there's really
12 anything from the incident that I would point out that --

13 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Let me just go back over and make sure
14 I've got everything. Okay. Do you remember the last name of the
15 victim that was at -- that was inside the apartment building that
16 refused treatment? I just need his last name. I've got all the
17 apartment tenants. I just need to know which one was seen by you.

18 CHIEF FREY: That would have been Patrick and --

19 CHIEF TUCCI: Ben.

20 CHIEF FREY: Yeah.

21 CHIEF TUCCI: I do not have the patient's name in my notes.

22 CHIEF FREY: I think they picked him up on Woodside?

23 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. Yeah, I can give you the
25 address where we made contact with that victim if you need that.

1 MS. HARLEY: The -- just while I'm waiting for that. The
2 male victim that, the -- I guess victim 1 and 2 was the female and
3 the male, both of them were alive. What injuries did he have?

4 MR. MOTACKI: I believe I was told initially that he had
5 burns, lacerations and puncture wounds to his lower extremities,
6 and they hadn't finished assessing his torso and upper extremities
7 at that time.

8 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: From the details on the report, it was
10 a closed ankle fracture, leg, whole arm and hand, other. He was
11 alert and oriented. No head trauma. Large abrasion on the left
12 side of the neck. Need (ph.) of tracheal deviation, negative JUB
13 (ph.), his lungs were clear, his pelvis was stable. He had
14 multiple lacerations on the upper and lower extremities, positive
15 deformity and swelling on the right ankle and lower leg. Positive
16 sensation and (indiscernible) pulse. And that's all that he has
17 noted there.

18 MS. HARLEY: Okay.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And the other gentleman was Mr.
20 Miller.

21 MS. HARLEY: Mr. Miller.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

23 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Great. Okay.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And we picked him up at 4015 Woodside.

25 MS. HARLEY: But he did refuse?

1 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He refused.

2 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. Great. Okay. Is there
3 anything that you think I should have asked and I failed to ask
4 about this incident?

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

6 MS. HARLEY: No.

7 MS. HARLEY: Okay. Well, thank you again, and I'm going to
8 end the interview. It is 1:38 p.m.

9 (Whereupon, at 1:38 p.m., the interview was concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD


IN THE MATTER OF: NATURAL GAS BUILDING EXPLOSION &
 FIRE NEAR WEST READING,
 PENNSYLVANIA, ON MARCH 24, 2023
 Interview of Jacob Motacki, Anthony
 Tucci, Jesse Magill & Carrie Frey

ACCIDENT NO.: PLD23LR002

PLACE: West Lawn, Pennsylvania

DATE: April 10, 2023

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.



Kathryn A. Mirfin
Transcriber